DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 422 998 JC 980 392

AUTHOR Bashford, Joanne
TITLE CLAST Status of Associate in Arts Degree Seekers: A Different Perspective on Fulfilling the CLAST Requirement. Information Capsule #97-05C.
INSTITUTION Miami-Dade Community Coll., FL. Office of Institutional Research.
PUB DATE 1997-07-00
NOTE 12p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; *Associate Degrees; College Curriculum; Community Colleges; Degree Requirements; Evaluation; Nontraditional Education; Success; *Test Results; Two Year College Students; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *College Level Academic Skills Test; Miami Dade Community College FL

ABSTRACT

This information capsule presents the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) status of Associate in Arts degree seekers at Miami-Dade Community College for fall terms 1995 and 1996. Tables present CLAST results by subtest for a cross section of A.A. degree seekers college-wide. For comparative purposes, fall term 1995 statistics (prior to the implementation of the CLAST alternative) are presented with those from fall term 1996. The introduction of the CLAST alternative increased the percentage of students satisfying the CLAST requirement in all categories of cumulative credits earned for each subtest. Overall, 27% of fall 1996 students had satisfied the CLAST requirement, compared with only 14% in fall 1995. For students who had earned 60 credits, 69% of fall 1996 students had satisfied the CLAST requirement, compared with only 53% in fall 1995. These data will form a baseline to assess the effect of implementing recommendations from the CLAST Action Plan. Information on the less successful mathematics results are included with explanations for lower scores. Implications of college-wide test results also are provided. (AS)

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ED 422 998

CLAST Status of Associate in Arts Degree Seekers: A Different Perspective on Fulfilling the CLAST Requirement

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Joanne Bashford

Miami-Dade Community College

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MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

INFORMATION CAPSULE

I.C. No. 97-05C

July 1997

CLAST Status of Associate in Arts Degree Seekers: A Different Perspective on Fulfilling the CLAST Requirement

Summary

This capsule presents the CLAST status of Associate in Arts degree seekers in Fall Terms 1995 and 1996. Students are grouped by the number of college credits completed (exclusive of college preparatory and ESL credits). Overall, 27% of Fall 1996 students had satisfied the CLAST requirement compared to only 14% in Fall 1995. For students who had earned more than 60 credits, 69% of Fall 1996 students had satisfied the CLAST requirement compared to only 53% in Fall 1995. These data will form a baseline to assess the effect of implementing recommendations from the CLAST Action Plan.

Background

A College-Wide Ad Hoc Task Force was convened beginning in April 1997 at Miami Dade Community College to assess the progress and success of Associate in Arts degree seeking students at M-DCC in fulfilling the CLAST requirement for graduation. Specifically the Task Force was charged with identifying areas in need of improvement and recommending strategies to address those needs. To accomplish this goal, a different perspective was required to evaluate CLAST test taking patterns and success rates. In the past, pass rates for each subtest were tracked, numbers of CLAST alternatives granted were calculated, and even the effectiveness of specific courses in preparing students for the CLAST was evaluated. The Task Force looked at this information, but also requested data on when (or at what point in their college careers) students were taking the CLAST or satisfying the CLAST requirement with an alternative or waiver.

College-Wide Results

The attached tables present CLAST results by subtest for a cross section of A.A. degree seekers college-wide. For comparison, Fall Term 1995 (prior to the implementation of the CLAST alternative) is presented in addition to Fall Term 1996. The introduction of the CLAST alternatives increased the percentage of students satisfying the CLAST requirement in all categories of cumulative credits earned for each subtest. For the Reading subtest 5% of students with 30 or fewer credits in Fall Term 1996 had met the requirement compared with 0% for Fall Term 1995. Looking at results for the total enrollment, 26% in Fall Term 1996 compared with 13% in Fall Term 1995 had met the CLAST requirement in Reading.

For the Mathematics subtest the results are somewhat less impressive since M-DCC students are more likely to earn an alternative in the communications subtests than the mathematics. For Fall Term 1996, 1% of students with 30 or fewer credits had met the CLAST requirement for mathematics compared with 0% for Fall Term 1995. Of the total enrollment 15% of students enrolled Fall Term 1996 met the requirement compared with 11% of students enrolled Fall Term 1995.

The results suggest that more than half of M-DCC students postpone taking the CLAST until they have accumulated over 50 credits toward their degree. For Fall Term 1996 only 43% of students had satisfied the Reading subtest of the CLAST requirement by passing the test or earning an alternative before the 51st credit. For the same group, 52% had not yet taken the test. Similar results can be seen for the English Language Skills, Essay and Mathematics subtests. For all subtests, over 70% of students enrolled Fall Term 1996 had not yet taken the CLAST and at least one in five students with more than 60 credits had not yet taken the test.

Implications

The test taking patterns identified in the results are undesirable for a number of reasons. Students wait until they are ready to graduate to take the CLAST and place an enormous amount of pressure on themselves to pass the test on the first attempt since it is the only remaining hurdle before graduation. It is also likely that an inordinate amount of time has elapsed between completion of relevant coursework and the CLAST. To increase our graduation rate we must improve the odds of M-DCC students meeting the CLAST requirement by the time they complete the required coursework for the A.A. degree.

The Task Force developed strategies and procedures to encourage (require when necessary) students to take the CLAST immediately following the relevant coursework if they have not earned a CLAST alternative. Additional recommendations relate to the inclusion of CLAST competencies in the curriculum, requiring enrollment in mathematics courses earlier in course sequencing (similar to the English requirement), requiring practice CLAST tests in specific courses, and providing feedback to faculty on the success of their students on the CLAST. The impact of these recommendations should be apparent in future cross-sectional CLAST results.

Joanne Bashford:ab

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Table 1

COLLEGE-WIDE

CLAST STATUS FOR A CROSS SECTION OF A.A. DEGREE SEEKERS

ESSAY SUBTEST

Fall Term 1995 Compared to Fall Term 1996

	Cumulative Credits Earned*													
	30 or Fewer		31 to 40		41 to 50		51 to 60		61 to 70		71 or more		Total	
CLAST Status	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96
Passed Test	42	51	137	109	370	218	838	599	1,401	1001	1,916	1,430	4,704	3,408
Percent	0%	0%	4%	4%	12%	8%	29%	22%	54%	40%	53%	46%	14%	10%
Waiver	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percent	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Alternative	0	869	0	941	0	1,044	0	958	0	772	0	637	0	5,221
Percent	0%	5%	0%	30%	0%	37%	0%	36%	0%	31%	0%	21%	0%	16%
Satisfied CLAST	**42**	**920**	**137**	**1,050**	**370**	**1,262**	**838**	**1,557**	**1,401**	**1,773**	**1,916**	**2,067**	**4,704**	**8,629**
Essay Percent	0%	5%	4%	34%	12%	45%	29%	58%	54%	72%	53%	67%	14%	27%
Failed Test	22	20	52	56	119	96	246	175	270	191	456	274	1,165	812
Percent	0%	0%	2%	2%	4%	3%	8%	7%	10%	8%	13%	9%	4%	2%
Not Tested	17,738	17,408	3,104	2,007	2,526	1,467	1,830	932	940	511	1,222	740	27,360	23,065
Percent	100%	95%	94%	64%	84%	52%	63%	35%	36%	21%	34%	24%	82%	71%
(Tested by 96-1)	(3,044)		(1,568)		(1,531)		(1,160)		(609)		(617)		(8,529)	
Total Group	17,802	18,348	3,293	3,113	3,015	2,825	2,914	2,664	2,611	2,475	3,594	3,081	33,229	32,506
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Excluding College Preparatory and ESL.

Data Source: Special IRS40 File (mdcc.hal.cmm.clast.profile)

Table 2

COLLEGE-WIDE

CLAST STATUS FOR A CROSS SECTION OF A.A. DEGREE SEEKERS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

Fall Term 1995 Compared to Fall Term 1996

	Cumulative Credits Earned*													
	30 or Fewer		31 to 40		41 to 50		51 to 60		61 to 70		71 or more		Total	
CLAST Status	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96
Passed Test	35	35	101	77	265	161	649	472	1,179	834	1,799	1,312	4,028	2,891
Percent	0%	0%	3%	2%	9%	6%	22%	18%	45%	34%	50%	43%	12%	9%
Waiver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0%
Percent	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Alternative	0	872	0	945	0	1,056	0	1010	0	841	0	682	0	5,406
Percent	0%	5%	0%	30%	0%	37%	0%	38%	0%	34%	0%	22%	0%	17%
Satisfied CLAST ELS	**35**	**907**	**101**	**1,022**	**265**	**1,217**	**649**	**1,482**	**1,180**	**1,675**	**1,799**	**1,994**	**4,029**	**8,297**
ELS Percent	0%	5%	3%	33%	9%	43%	22%	56%	45%	68%	50%	65%	12%	26%
Failed Test	29	34	88	84	224	141	436	250	492	290	573	347	1,842	1,146
Percent	0%	0%	3%	3%	7%	5%	15%	9%	19%	12%	16%	11%	6%	4%
Not Tested	17,738	17,407	3,104	2,007	2,526	1,467	1,829	932	939	510	1,222	740	27,358	23,063
Percent	100%	95%	94%	64%	84%	52%	63%	35%	36%	21%	34%	24%	82%	71%
(Tested by 96-1)	(3,044)		(1,568)		(1,531)		(1,160)		(607)		(617)		(8,527)	
Total Group	17,802	18,348	3,293	3,113	3,015	2,825	2,914	2,664	2,611	2,475	3,594	3,081	33,229	32,506
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Excluding College Preparatory and ESL.

Data Source: Special IRS40 File (mdcc.hal.cmm.clast profile)

Table 3

COLLEGE-WIDE

CLAST STATUS FOR A CROSS SECTION OF A.A. DEGREE SEEKERS

READING SUBTEST

Fall Term 1995 Compared to Fall Term 1996

	Cumulative Credits Earned*													
	30 or Fewer		31 to 40		41 to 50		51 to 60		61 to 70		71 or more		Total	
CLAST Status	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96
Passed Test	36	34	110	72	298	169	692	480	1,238	865	1,818	1,304	4,192	2,924
Percent	0%	0%	3%	2%	10%	6%	24%	18%	47%	35%	51%	42%	13%	9%
Waiver	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Percent	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Alternative	0	872	0	951	0	1,057	0	990	0	822	0	694	0	5,386
Percent	0%	5%	0%	31%	0%	37%	0%	37%	0%	33%	0%	23%	0%	17%
Satisfied CLAST	**36**	**906**	**110**	**1,023**	**298**	**1,226**	**692**	**1,470**	**1,238**	**1,687**	**1,818**	**1,999**	**4,192**	**8,311**
Reading Percent	0%	5%	3%	33%	10%	43%	24%	55%	47%	68%	51%	65%	13%	26%
Failed Test	29	35	79	83	191	132	393	262	434	278	555	342	1,681	1,132
Percent	0%	0%	2%	3%	6%	5%	13%	10%	17%	11%	15%	11%	5%	3%
Not Tested	17,737	17,407	3,104	2,007	2,526	1,467	1,829	932	939	510	1,221	740	27,356	23,063
Percent	100%	95%	94%	64%	84%	52%	63%	35%	36%	21%	34%	24%	82%	71%
(Tested by 96-1)	(3,044)		(1,568)		(1,531)		(1,160)		(607)		(617)		(8,527)	
Total Group	17,802	18,348	3,293	3,113	3,015	2,825	2,914	2,664	2,611	2,475	3,594	3,081	33,229	32,506
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Excluding College Preparatory and ESL.

Data Source: Special IRS40 File (mdcc.hal.cmm.clast.profile)

Table 4

COLLEGE-WIDE

CLAST STATUS FOR A CROSS SECTION OF A.A. DEGREE SEEKERS

MATHEMATICS SUBTEST

Fall Term 1995 Compared to Fall Term 1996

	Cumulative Credits Earned*													
	30 or Fewer		31 to 40		41 to 50		51 to 60		61 to 70		71 or more		Total	
CLAST Status	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96	Fall 95	Fall 96
Passed Test	28	37	71	94	237	218	536	496	1,015	893	1,686	1,278	3,573	3,016
Percent	0%	0%	2%	3%	8%	8%	18%	19%	39%	36%	47%	41%	11%	9%
Waiver	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	3	1	3	4	7
Percent	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Alternative	0	133	0	228	0	333	0	329	0	359	0	407	0	1,789
Percent	0%	1%	0%	7%	0%	12%	0%	12%	0%	15%	0%	13%	0%	6%
Satisfied CLAST Math	28	170	71	322	237	552	536	825	1,018	1,255	1,687	1,688	3,577	4,812
Percent	0%	1%	2%	10%	8%	20%	18%	31%	39%	51%	47%	55%	11%	15%
Failed Test	36	44	118	121	250	228	547	512	653	575	682	536	2,286	2,016
Percent	0%	0%	4%	4%	8%	8%	19%	19%	25%	23%	19%	17%	7%	6%
Not Tested	17,738	18,134	3,104	2,670	2,528	2,045	1,831	1,327	940	645	1,225	857	27,366	25,678
Percent	100%	99%	94%	86%	84%	72%	63%	50%	36%	26%	34%	28%	82%	79%
(Tested by 96-1)	(3,044)		(1,568)		(1,532)		(1,161)		(608)		(620)		(8,533)	
Total Group	17,802	18,348	3,293	3,113	3,015	2,825	2,914	2,664	2,611	2,475	3,594	3,081	33,229	32,506
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Excluding College Preparatory and ESL.

Data Source: Special IRS40 File (mdcc.hal.cmm.clast profile)